

11-12-2000

Concert: SoVoSo

SoVoSo

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs

Recommended Citation

SoVoSo, "Concert: SoVoSo" (2000). *All Concert & Recital Programs*. 6161.
https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs/6161

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Concert & Recital Programs at Digital Commons @ IC. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Concert & Recital Programs by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ IC.

*"It is
my plan
to build
a school
of music
second
to none."*

—William
Grant Egbert
(1867–1928)
Founder,
Ithaca
Conservatory
of Music

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA

ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERTS 2000-2001

SoVoSó

from the Soul to the Voice to the Song

**Melanie Rath
David Worm
Sunshine Garcia**

**Destani Wolf
Joey Blake
Norman Pitters**

SoVoSó is a highly imaginative a cappella sextet that sings a compelling mix of jazz, R&B, gospel, world, pop, and improvisational music. Assembled in 1986 by renowned vocalist Bobby McFerrin, members of SoVoSó originally performed with McFerrin in his a cappella group Voicestra until 1993. The group has evolved and shaped its own musical style since renaming itself SoVoSó in 1994.

Each member of the ensemble is a skilled soloist and composer, trained in widely varying musical genres that enrich and strengthen the group. The culturally diverse and closely knit sextet is a living study in how gifted musicians can come together to make a wholly original sound without compromising any member's individual approach to the music. SoVoSó's trademark is its exceptional ability to transform itself into a vocal orchestra, highlighted by spontaneous musical inventions. The singers explore the extended capability of the human voice with such elements as groove-oriented bass lines, syncopated guitar or horn-like vocal riffs, and compelling vocal percussion, all of which support exquisite harmonies and intricate melodies—a transcendent magic where each voice contributes. The result is a spiritual expression with an emotional range that fills the heart and frees the soul.

SoVoSó won first prize and was named "audience favorite" at the 1997 National Harmony Sweepstakes A Cappella Festival. The ensemble's innovative sound can be heard on its two critically acclaimed CDs. *World Jazz A Cappella* was named best studio album at the 1997 Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards (CARA). The song "Say" won best original pop song, and "Thank You" won best pop cover song. *Truth and Other Stories*, released in 1998, garnered CARA nominations in the jazz album category; the song "Gift of Music" was nominated for jazz song; and "Be of Love" was nominated for world beat song.

SoVoSó has shared the stage with Maya Angelou, Tracy Chapman, Jack DeJohnette, Joe Henderson, Gladys Knight, Lyle Lovett, Bobby McFerrin, Diane Reeves, Take Six, and Manhattan Transfer. Other

dynamic collaborations, highlights of the Vancouver Folk Music Festival, were SoVoSó's on-stage improvisations with groups from Africa, Russia, and Brazil. Noted SoVoSó engagements include the Monterey Jazz Festival, Villa Montalvo, and the Mt. Hood Jazz Festival. The Bay Area is endowed with a wealth of performance vehicles that have provided additional outlets for the talents of members of SoVoSó: Vocal Motion, Oakland Youth Chorus, Street Sounds, University of California Berkeley Gospel Choir, Darryl Keyes Ensemble, Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir, and Jazz Mouth—just to name a few.

Born into a musical family, **Melanie Rath** has been a student of music her whole life, beginning with piano and saxophone lessons at an early age. Extending her vocal skills and awareness of styles, Melanie had classical voice training in college, where she performed in musicals, operas, and recitals. Finally, she studied jazz theory and vocals, continuing to hone her warm expressive style. Currently, Melanie works as a freelance studio recording artist and has sung for national Chrysler, Sprint, and Brita television commercials and radio spots. She composes, arranges, and teaches voice and piano. Melanie credits Miriam Makeba, Abby Lincoln, and her mother as her primary vocal influences.

Destani Wolf (pronounced “destiny”), who grew up in Berkeley and aspired to be a singer from a very young age, fronts her own blues/jazz/soul original band. She has also been featured with many accomplished Bay Area performers, such as Faye Carol, Josh Jones, Johnny Tolbert. On occasion Destani still performs with the band she helped establish, Fiya Bahl (now called Delta Nove) in Long Beach, California. A San Francisco State music major, she also teaches voice to students of Mestre Bida Accordion's Capoeira Arts Café (Brazilian martial arts dance form). Destani's freedom with music helps her to communicate the strength of love, which she hopes to share with the world.

A trombonist since childhood, **David Worm's** training and musicianship give him the flexibility to sing in a wide variety of musical styles, including jazz, R&B, pop, and rock. David has been a vocalist in many Bay Area rock bands over the years. His current band, Glass House, is working on its second CD, after the critically acclaimed *Why Follow*. His vocal history includes collaborations with choreographers Suzanne Gallo, Robert Moses, June Wantanabe, and Brenda Way, as well as touring with Bobby McFerrin's Hard Coral and Circlesongs ensembles. David also works as a freelance radio voice-over announcer and as a musician and performer in the advertising industry.

Joey Blake, nurtured by a family of instrumentalists and gospel singers, is a skilled singer, instrumentalist (piano, guitar, bass, percussion), composer, dancer, and choir director. He studied classical voice and vocal jazz arranging at Phil Mattson's School for Vocalists in Spokane, Washington, developing his deeply resonant and expressive bass vocals. He currently sings in the West African group Kotoja and leads his own gospel choir. Joey played and sang on Kenny Loggins's *Conviction of the Heart* tour and sang and danced in his VH-1 special; he also danced in Bobby McFerrin's video *The Garden*. Joey teaches music at Oakland's College Prep School and gives private voice and piano lessons.

Born into a family of musicians and teachers, **Sunshine Garcia** is no stranger to improvisational singing. She attended California State University Hayward, working towards a degree in expressive arts, which she designed. Sunshine was a member of the Redwood House Choir, which annually performed a series of specially commissioned works called the New Spirituals Project. Sunshine is currently singing and playing flute in the San Francisco-based folk-rock trio Passenger, and occasionally joins the Americana-roots band Box Set. Her desire is to use music as a tool for healing, growth, social change, and communal fun!

Norman Pitters was surrounded by music as a child, growing up singing in church and school. Voted "most talented" at Golden Gate Academy in Oakland, he was then performing vocals and alto sax in such notable Bay Area ensembles as the Chosen Few, Goldenaires, and Patria. Norman later sang with the University of California, Berkeley Gospel Choir and then the R&B group Voice Design. Singing is a creative outlet for him, and if he can touch someone in the heart and soul in a positive way he considers that a great accomplishment.

Ford Hall
Sunday, November 12, 2000
8:15 p.m.

SoVoSó is managed by Ralph Pavone Productions.